

April 8, 1974

SENATOR MARVEL: I would read four point to you that describe these amendments, and I think they are significant. Because of all the trouble that we've had in this whole area of mental health administration. The first point in regard to these amendments to 302 commits the state to improving mental health care to regionalization without duplication of services, and without differences in service to ability to pay. Number two It develops a planning process, which includes the regional boards, both levels of advisory boards, and a study of current resources in public hearings. To find out exactly what services are available. Number three, it develops a statewide plan and minimum standards under community scrutiny and only proceed with regional contracting after the plan and the standards are adopted. Number four, to provide a system of checks and balances within comprehensive community mental health services. Each one of these items is important if you are going to have a successful community mental health program, which means decentralization and an orderly fashion so that the present facilities dovetail in with the future facilities and there are some checks and balances. Mr. President, I move the adoption of the amendments to 302.

PRESIDENT: Thank you, first to speak is Senator Stahmer. All right, Senator Whitney.

SENATOR WHITNEY: Mr. President, and members of the Legislature. I want to explain the background of this, and I want to oppose the amendment. And why do I want to oppose the amendment? Because Senator Stahmer has read over this amendment. He has read over Senator Goodrich's amendments and he's attempted to combine both of them into one amendment. Taking the best parts out of the amendments. And I have read over Senator Stahmer's amendments and I feel that it is the correct amendment to offer. Now, Senator Marvel, who is Chairman and is the Chairman of the Budget Committee appointed three members of the Budget Committee to make a study of the Mental Health Programs in the state of Nebraska. Senator Marvel appointed me chairman of the committee. He appointed Senator Stahmer and Senator Nore on the committee. We drove all over the state of Nebraska. Visited many, many of the cities. The comprehensive mental programs that we are going on. And we discovered that the people wanted this kind of a program LB302 right now. They wanted it. Now Senator Marvel amendment would say that we have a study first. Well, Senator Stahmer and Nore and I already made a year of study on this. We have the knowledge. We know that this is what the people want. Therefore, I'm going to have to ask that we reject this amendment. Unless Senator Marvel is willing to ask unanimous consent to have it withdrawn and then have Senator Stahmer's amendment in place of it, because I think it would be the logical thing for him to do. Because we are putting back in those things in my judgement which Senator Marvel wants, but it also puts in what Senator Goodrich wants, and it coordinates all of the things that everybody wants. In my judgement. And this bill is intended to provide a comprehensive mental health programs throughout the state of Nebraska. At a price that everybody can afford. And if we go about it like Senator Stahmer and Nore and I wish, were going to be able to provide services for twice as many people at approximately the same cost that we are doing it now. And therefore I ask that you reject this amendment and then accept the Stahmer amendment which follows.